AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

There will be no greater measure of your commitment to the health of our children or the future of our Nation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Death of James B. McDougal

March 8, 1998

I am saddened to learn about Jim McDougal's death today. I have good memories of the years we worked together in Arkansas, and I extend my condolences to his family.

Remarks to the American Medical Association National Leadership Conference

March 9, 1998

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. And thank you, Dr. Wootton. He was giving his talk, and I was listening, and I was thinking: I agree with all that; there's nothing left for me to say. If I knew a couple of funny stories, I could just tell them and leave and thank you for the opportunity. [*Laughter*]

Dr. Dickey, congratulations on being the president-elect. Dr. Reardon, thank you for serving on the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality. Dr. Smoak, thank you for telling me there's nothing incompatible between a doctor named "Smoke" and a campaign against tobacco. [*Laughter*] Dr. Jensen, ladies and gentlemen.

I am honored to be here and to be working with the AMA on so many important fronts. We have, in the past, sometimes had honest differences on policy but have always agreed on our profound obligation to the health of our Nation's families. We're walking together in a step-by-step approach to health care reform, expanding the promise of new medical technologies, extending health care opportunities to the most vulnerable Americans.

Together we've helped Americans to keep their health coverage when they change jobs or someone in their families gets sick. And in last year's balanced budget agreement we helped to make sure that up to 5 million uninsured children will get the medical coverage they deserve and the help they need, with the biggest increase in health coverage for children since 1965.

We have worked to increase medical research and to support greater efforts at preservation and care for conditions from breast cancer to diabetes. Last year, in our balanced budget plan, the diabetes component was said by the American Diabetes Association to be the most important advance in the treatment and care of diabetes since the discovery of insulin.

We found the right family doctor for America, Dr. David Satcher, our new Surgeon General. Last month your voices were strong and united in support of his nomination, and I thank you, and America's families thank you. The lesson of these endeavors is that when we work together, we can get things done.

This is a very great moment for America on the edge of a new century, a new millennium, and a completely new economy and new global society. We see dramatic changes in the way our people work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. Our economy is the strongest it's been in a generation. In 5 years, we have 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the highest homeownership rate in the history of the country. Our social problems are on the mend. Crime is at its lowest rate in 24 years. The welfare rolls are the lowest in 27 years. Teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births are declining. Our leadership is unrivaled around the world as we work for peace and freedom and security.

Still, as I said in the State of the Union Address, these good times do not give us the opportunity to rest or withdraw. Instead, if we are wise, we will use this as a time to act and to build, to secure our prosperity and strengthen our future, first of all, by not spending this budget surplus we waited 30 years for before it exists and putting Social Security first, saving Social Security for the 21st century so that the baby boom generation does not either bankrupt Social Security